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3 March 1963

DDI-782-63

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: Task Force Status Report as of 1500,
3 March

1. This task force continued to consist of a highly effective and fast moving arrangement for continuous cross-checking among the people assigned in various agencies to the Cuban problem, a method of operation which I still believe is superior to any group gathered in one place, cut off from their working levels and sources of information.

2. A good example of how effective this operation can be has been the speed with which information about the CANNAREGIO has traveled by phone through the community. The report [REDACTED] that she was still in Havana harbor was communicated to anyone with any reason to know within 30 minutes. Her departure on Sunday morning was known throughout the community within 2 1/2 hours from the time she left. To my surprise the CANNAREGIO was overflown by the Navy at 1245, Sunday, 3 March after she had headed west from Havana. No deck cargo was observed; she was riding high in the water.

3. Much of this network's energies have been expended on following and keeping tabs on the CANNAREGIO. Additionally, however, we have also produced a sanitized correlation of weather and overflights in the period 5 September-14 October, included as Tab "A" in the IG memorandum of 27 February. We have also firmed up relationships [REDACTED] and are now collaborating amicably with them. The Cuban reconnaissance activity daily is now picked up [REDACTED] and is being relayed electrically [REDACTED]. Contact has also been established with Mr. Cottrell in State and with Bromley Smith at the White House. Up to now it has been to provide them prompt coverage of the CANNAREGIO.

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5. There is still no significant change in the status of Soviet forces in Cuba despite the considerable efforts at surveillance carried on by the intelligence community. High-altitude coverage of the camps continues daily without any signs of impending departures becoming visible. The small number, less than 1000, who have been seen going out in Havana could easily have been culled from units without any external reflections of their departure since they did not leave with their equipment. [REDACTED] the Soviets seem to be a lot less open about their withdrawals than they were when the missiles were taken out. We may see some change when the NAKHIMOV's arrival is more imminent, about 7 March; her capacity as a troop carrier (about 4500), if she is to be used as such, ought to prompt some movements we can detect.

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